



Time for a Tune-up: Learning from Process Data

Process data: Documents that show the progress and process of programs and strategies the school is using for improvement efforts. It may include descriptions of school programs, instructional strategies, classroom practice, school improvement action plans, curriculum guides.

—adapted from Victoria Bernhardt (1998)

Why go this route?

- To monitor instruction and practices so you can know what's succeeding.
- To increase student achievement by “tuning” your practice in response to results data.
- To focus instruction based on data.
- To encourage accountability.

You'll know you've arrived when...

- Practices known to be effective are named in the School Improvement Plan and monitored for consistent use.
- Decision-making in your school reflects process data.
- Student achievement has increased in areas impacted by decisions and strategies shaped by process data.

Construction Zone

You'll need someone to adapt or develop forms for you, and a data-manager or team to organize and analyze the data.



It's about TIME

- One or two meetings will be needed to prepare to do the assessment(s).
- One meeting will be needed to complete the assessment.
- The team will need 2-3 weeks to organize and analyze data.
- Sharing results and developing a response plan should be done on an ongoing basis. Carve out 20 minutes at each staff meeting.




Potential COSTS

- Time and professional development will likely be needed but can be managed as part of your plan.
- If you need to hire a data manager, full or part-time salary would be needed.

The Process

*A step-by-step guide to
collecting data about
instruction and practice*

NOTE: Steps marked with a 
are accompanied by one or more
inserts, included in this packet.

1 Meet with the leadership team to discuss the process for collecting data. Develop a “charge” for the team or committee that will do this work—perhaps they could be the “What’s Working Here?” team.

See MI-Map packet 8.1 “*Setting Up Shared Decision-Making Teams*” for a template “charge” to clarify what the team is responsible for.

2 Recruit and orient team members to the charge.

3 Begin to collect data on the processes that contribute to your total school improvement efforts. We’ve developed surveys to explore **READING** practice, but you might explore any other practice focused on in your School Improvement Plan. Areas that you might want to include in your data scan are:

A Classroom Practice

Using an instrument like INSERT A for Step 3 (*Time Spent Reading Log*) can be helpful in diagnosing problems in a fundamental subject area.

B Instructional Strategies

Use INSERT B for Step 3 (*Instructional Strategies Chart*) to survey teachers and analyze how varied instructional strategies are in your building.

C Practices at Home

To be data “rich” collect data from students and parents. For instance, INSERT C for Step 3 (*Daily Reading Practice Slips*) explores time spent on reading at home. *In addition to the practice slips, we’ve included letters for teachers and parents as well as a grading rubric.

D School Programs used to increase student achievement

For instance, see INSERT D for Step 3 (*Supplemental Program Effectiveness Chart*) to analyze the viability of your school’s programs.

4 Analyze the data by teacher and by grade level.

INSERTS for Step 4 illustrate data analysis sheets for the data-gathering tools we suggested in Step 3. If you’ve developed your own tools, build similar overview summary sheets, and tally responses with hash-marks, so you can see patterns.

5 Share findings with staff. Discuss whether changes in practice (or working toward more uniform adoption of the most promising practices) might be warranted.

6 Develop a plan based on the data. Insert for Step 6 may be helpful as you plan.

7 Implement and monitor the plan.

Getting more mileage from learning from process data

How using data about instructional practices can benefit your school relative to the following initiatives:

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

- Schools are expected to use SCIENTIFICALLY BASED research practices and materials. Federal funding will go only to programs that are backed by evidence THAT THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED:

1. Does the work have a solid theoretical or research foundation?
2. Was the research designed to minimize alternative explanations for observed effects?
3. Are the data based on a single-investigator, single-classroom study, or did multiple investigators in numerous locations collect similar data?
4. Were randomly assigned control groups used?
5. Is there enough detail to replicate the study?
6. Has the study been subject to rigorous and objective review?

(U.S. Department of Education, NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND:
A TOOLKIT FOR TEACHERS, p. 29, ED PUBS, Washington, D.C., 2003)

Education YES!

- Among Education YES!'s School Performance Indicators is a score for teacher quality and professional development.

MI-Plan

- Step 2, Pages 9-13, "*Program and Processes Inventory.*" This process assists the school in charting the program/initiative, goals, students involved, impact on students, duration of the program and data collected. Reflective questions and a data-collection rubric are included to assist staff with the process.



Resources

Articles

“Data-Driven Decisions”

Articles by Theodore B. Creighton, Raymond Yeagley, Philip A. Streifer, Francis Barnes, Marilyn Miller and George A. Goens. *The School Administrator*, April 2001.

This issue of *The School Administrator* includes a number of articles on data-driven decision-making. *The School Administrator* is available online at <http://www.aasa.org>

“No Excuses for Low Learning—School Proves Poverty, Diversity Aren’t Barriers to Achievement”

Joan Richardson. *Results*, National Staff Development Council, February 2002.

This article describes how the use of data in decision-making to focus the school improvement efforts of Bennett-Kew Elementary School in California helped this school find itself in the top tier of schools measured by California’s Academic Performance Index, surpassing performance in well-known affluent suburbs.

Books

Data Analysis for Comprehensive Schoolwide Improvement.

Victoria Bernhardt. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education Press. 1998.

The purposes of this book are to update the original “Data Analysis for Comprehensive Schoolwide Improvement” book with new and improved strategies and knowledge, and to clarify:

- Why data are important
- What data to gather
- How data—properly analyzed—can make a difference in meeting the needs of every student in the school
- How to communicate and report data results, including your obligations under NCLB legislation.

Root Cause Analysis: School Leader’s Guide to Using Data to Dissolve Problems

P. Preuss. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education Press. 2003.

This book provides school leaders with a plethora of templates to use to identify the root causes of student achievement problems in their schools.

People

Specialists

Most Intermediate School Districts have a specialist working with schools on data collection and analysis in their service areas.

Coaches

The *Alliance for Building Capacity in Schools* website lists coaches whose training has been provided by Michigan State University and supported by the Michigan Department of Education. Some are active in data analysis in Michigan schools. Please visit:

www.abcscoaches.org

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